

State Representative  
**Mike Carrell**



State Representative  
**Gigi Talcott**

28th District

# News & Views



## 1998 Session Preview and Questionnaire

**Dear friends and neighbors,**

As we prepare for a new year and a new session of the Legislature in Olympia, we're eager to:

- **Brief you on issues that are being considered for action this year.**
- **Ask you how you'd like to be represented on these and other issues you care about.**

We are working to assure that your government serves you, not the other way around.

State government is now more accountable to the individuals, families and job providers of Washington. Major accomplishments in the last three years include:

- **The lowest level growth of state government in 25 years.**
- **More than \$1 billion in tax relief.**
- **Swifter, surer consequences for dangerous juvenile offenders.**
- **Welfare reforms that are helping more able-bodied adults become self-supporting.**

Still, there is much left to do.

Inside this newsletter you'll find an update on issues that are being hotly debated as we approach the start of the new legislative session on Monday, Jan. 12. There's also a two-page questionnaire designed for you to give us your thoughts on key issues.

To get your input before the session begins, we're asking you to join us at the Lakewood Library on Saturday morning, Jan. 10 to tally the results of the survey and to personally share your thoughts and concerns. This forum provides a wonderful opportunity for you to see what others think and let us know what's on your mind. We'll value your advice whether you choose to mail the questionnaire to us in advance of the town hall meeting (*mail by Jan. 7*) or bring it with you on the 10th. Of course, you can mail the survey anytime if you are unable to attend the town hall meeting.

We always encourage you to keep in touch with us:

- **Join us for a town hall meeting (*details on the back of this newsletter*) so we can share a direct, personal exchange of ideas.**
- **Invite one or both of us to come meet with you and your friends at work, at a club meeting, or in your neighborhood. Such opportunities allow us to hear your thoughts and answer your questions.**
- **Call either of us using the toll-free Legislative Hotline: 1-800-562-6000 . . . or contact our Olympia offices: Gigi at (360)786-7890 or Mike at (360)786-7958. More information about how to contact us is on the back of this newsletter.**

Whether you write, call, fax, e-mail or stop us at the gas station or grocery store . . . the most important part of our job is giving you and your neighbors a stronger voice in writing the laws that govern our magnificent state.

Thanks in advance for keeping in touch!

Sincerely,  
  
Mike Carrell

  
Gigi Talcott



## Saving Lives by Stopping Drunk Drivers

The day Princess Diana was killed in an accident with a drunk driver at the wheel of her car, my daughter-in-law was also hit by a drunk driver.

While my daughter-in-law is fortunate to be walking again after months of hospitalization, more than 330 Washingtonians tragically lost their lives in alcohol-related accidents last year — an increase of over 18 percent.

It's time to toughen our DUI (*driving under the influence*) laws. Do you agree?

**Here are a few of the solutions being proposed:**

- **Suspend a motorist's driver's license for 90 days for a first DUI conviction, no exceptions.**
- **Take away the vehicle of drivers caught driving with a suspended or revoked license. The vehicle would immediately be impounded and might later be forfeited.**
- **Require installation of an ignition lock device on the car of repeat drunk drivers. Their car could only be started after the driver blows into a machine that tests for alcohol.**
- **Toughen the state standard of legal intoxication by lowering the maximum permissible blood alcohol level from .10 to .08 percent (*roughly four drinks in an hour for a 180 lb. man*). This limit is the law in California, Oregon and many other states, as well as British Columbia.**

## Working for Needed Changes in Education

For decades local school districts and the state have been granting high school diplomas based on the required "seat time" that a student spent in school.

Now, simply showing up at school won't be enough to qualify students for graduation.

Starting with the Class of 2006 — this year's fourth-graders — all students will be required to meet or exceed strict state standards for performance in reading, writing, listening and math.

Students will no longer be permitted to graduate from high school unprepared to pursue their educational or career interests. We are going to make sure that graduates have learned the basic skills and knowledge they need to be productive citizens.

These are huge and, I believe, long overdue changes!



## Responding to the First Student Assessment Results

As a lifetime teacher, parent and now grandparent, I've been shocked to discover that somehow as we embraced classrooms enriched with literature and "whole language," in many schools throughout the state we neglected to teach our beginning readers the most basic symbols and sounds of our language, known as "phonics."

Recent results of reading tests given to fourth-grade students demonstrate just how poorly many of our schools are doing in teaching youngsters to read.

---

**STATEWIDE, ONLY 47.6% OF FOURTH-GRADERS MET OR EXCEEDED THE ACCEPTABLE STANDARD ON THE READING PORTION OF THE ASSESSMENT TEST.**

---

Not only are we doing an inadequate job of teaching reading, that failure hurts students the rest of the way in their education. I agree with Superintendent of Public Instruction Terry Bergeson who states, "We must first learn to read, so then we can read to learn."

As a member of the House Education Committee, I'm supporting local and state efforts to bring proven comprehensive reading programs to all students in need of help. Without the ability to read, a child's future is bleak — and that harms our entire society.

## Update on Ft. Steilacoom Park

The county and the state are currently "dotting the Is and crossing the Ts" to assure that the property remains a park with potential for improved maintenance for the next 50 years. A final agreement could be signed and, hopefully, be old news by the time you receive this newsletter.

## Meeting Transportation Needs

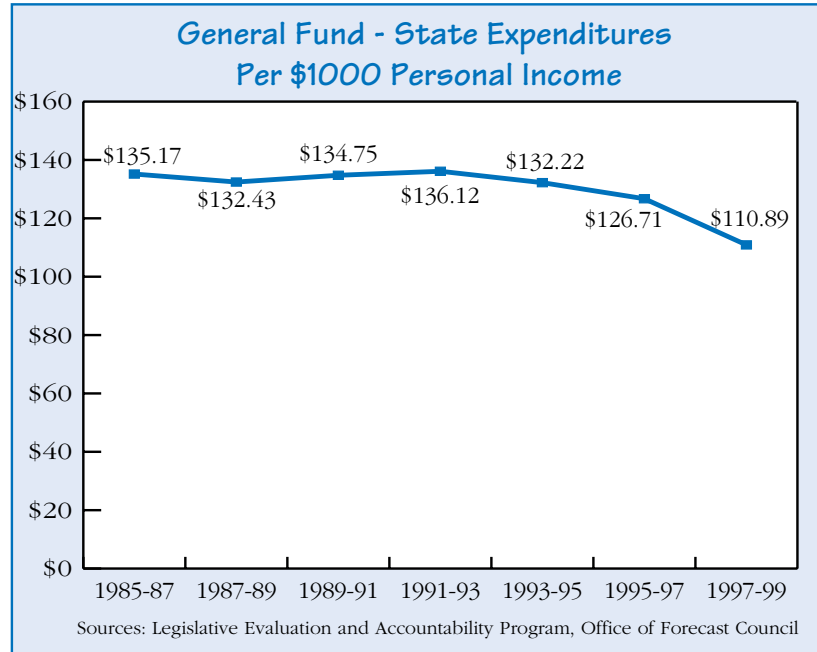
One of the most talked about subjects in Olympia — and probably in your neighborhood, too — is the need to repair or improve roads, along with other transportation concerns. Legislative leaders have made it clear that we do not intend to increase the gas tax this year.

We will be looking for solutions that give you more for the tax dollars you already pay. We will be working closely with the Department of Transportation to identify management and policy changes that can improve our ability to meet the needs of Washingtonians, while looking at a variety of solutions to the problems we face.

We are interested in your thoughts on this complex issue. It's one of the subjects on the attached survey. In addition, we will listen to your ideas and provide more details for you to consider at our town hall meeting on Jan. 10 at the Lakewood Library.

### Standing up for Taxpayers

The new legislative session begins with continued economic growth, full employment and further growth in state revenues.



Initiative 601's spending limit held down the growth of government spending and re-oriented the Legislature. You demanded taxpayer relief — not new spending programs.

We responded by holding growth of the state general-fund budget to the lowest level in 25 years, while repealing most of the massive tax rate increases that occurred in 1993 and 1994. And we are actively pursuing other ways to return your money to you.

As Finance Committee vice chairman, I have focused on reducing your tax burden. Property tax reform is an area in which I've been very active, so I was particularly happy that the voters overwhelmingly approved Referendum 47. The tax cutting concepts in this new law are based upon bills that I wrote in 1996. One result of the new law is that future increases in property taxes will be cut in half, if local government honors Ref. 47 by strictly limiting your local taxes.

After three years of tax cuts, the state budget surplus is still over \$860 million. This surplus is mostly the result of I-601 budget constraints, economic growth (\$310 million) and carryover money from the previous budget period (\$550 million). Since the \$550 million from prior years is one-time-only money that, if spent, will be gone, there is general agreement to hold at least \$500 million of the surplus in reserve for any future downturn in the economy.

As many of you know, I have written a bill to lower the MVET (the excise tax paid when we license our vehicles each year) by 10 percent and to eliminate the "new car penalty." I

also have prepared legislation to further reduce the burden of property taxes by freezing the state portion of the tax.

My proposals are but two of many bills dealing with the surplus. Gigi and I are very interested in your suggestions and it is the first subject on the attached survey. We hope you will take a few moments to respond.

### Protecting the Public from Dangerous Juvenile Offenders

Juvenile justice reform laws passed last year marked the first serious effort in 20 years to rein in teenage criminals. I believe that more remains to be done, including tougher penalties for younger juvenile offenders. While we toughened the laws for 16 and 17 year olds last year, the data shows that the most dramatic increase in juvenile crime begins at age 13.

We would appreciate any thoughts you have on what should be done to deal with these younger violent criminals.

### Fixing the Welfare System

The number of people on welfare began to fall even before the new law adopted this year took effect in the fall. Thousands of people are off welfare and now have a job.

We are now sending the right message to people: you are expected to work, if you are able to work.

Our welfare reforms are also saving taxpayers millions of dollars.



It was your demand for change that helped me, along with other legislators on the Children and Family Services Committee, to write a bill to fix the broken system of welfare that had been allowed to exist for so long.

We'd appreciate any thoughts you'd care to share on the new work-oriented system to help the needy.

Please take the time to complete and return this form. Your opinions on these issues — along with your additional comments on any subject of concern to you — help us to represent you in Olympia.

Upon completion of the questionnaire, please re-fold this page with the return mail panel showing, write in your return address, add a stamp and mail it -- or bring it with you to talk with us personally on Saturday, Jan. 10 at the Lakewood Library (details on the back of this newsletter).

Your ideas are very important to us. We recognize that you aren't given detailed information, but we're looking for some basic direction from you. You're welcome to call us for further details as legislation is written and hearings are held.

Thank you for participating in this survey.

## BUDGET SURPLUS

**With the strong economic growth in Washington and the controlled growth of government, we now have a surplus estimated at about \$860 million. What would you do with this revenue?**

*Voter 1 Voter 2*

- |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | Reduce the surplus through supplemental appropriations within the I-601 limit.                                   |
| _____ | _____ | Reduce the surplus by cutting taxes (license tabs, B&O taxes, property taxes).                                   |
| _____ | _____ | Retain a large portion of the surplus in a reserve fund to protect against an economic downturn.                 |
| _____ | _____ | Increase state spending (specify where: _____).  |
| _____ | _____ | Reduce the surplus by moving money to the transportation budget to pay for road repair and highway construction. |
| _____ | _____ | Reduce the surplus by making larger debt payments to save money on future interest.                              |

## IMPROVING EDUCATION

**Do you support (S) or oppose (O) each of the following proposals?**

*Voter 1 Voter 2*

- |                         |                         |                         |                         |  |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Increase state spending on kindergarten-through-high school education.   |
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Require that students demonstrate academic achievement before promotion to the next grade.   |
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Teach and test basic reading skills, including phonics, in the second grade to ensure that each student learns the basics before being expected to perform more complex tasks. |

- |                         |                         |                         |                         |  |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Test teachers for competency.  |
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Strengthen basic academic areas: reading, writing, math and science.                           |
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Increase the authority of teachers and administrators to maintain discipline in the classroom. |

## STOPPING DRUNK DRIVERS

**Do you believe that any or all of the following proposals will be effective in better protecting the public from drunk drivers? Please indicate whether you support (S) or oppose (O) each of these ideas.**

*Voter 1 Voter 2*

- |                         |                         |                         |                         |   |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Increase the use of vehicle impoundment to keep drunk drivers off the road.                   |
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Toughen laws dealing with license suspension rules.   |
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Reduce the statewide legal blood alcohol limit for operating a motor vehicle from .10 to .08. |
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Expand the use of ignition lock devices for repeat offenders.                                 |
| <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | <input type="radio"/> S | <input type="radio"/> O | Take strong action to save lives by keeping drunk drivers off the road.                       |

## MEETING TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

**Which of the following statements most closely reflects your opinion?**

*Voter 1 Voter 2*

- |       |       |   |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | No increase in the transportation budget is needed.   |
| _____ | _____ | Use the portion of the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET paid for license tabs) that now goes into the general fund for transportation needs. This would require a cut in the state general fund — what cuts would you make? |
| _____ | _____ | _____   |
| _____ | _____ | _____   |
| _____ | _____ | Increase the state gas tax.   |
| _____ | _____ | Increase the state gas tax while reducing the state portion of the MVET.  |
| _____ | _____ | Use all or part of the general fund budget surplus to pay for highway repairs, construction of HOV lanes, grade separations between vehicles and trains, and freight mobility projects.                                   |



# 1998 Legislative Questionnaire

Also . . .

What do you want us to know about the proposals for a new or expanded Narrows Bridge? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## SETTING LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

What's most important to you personally (Please rank 1-7, with "1" being most important)?

*Voter 1 Voter 2*

_____	_____	Improving education.
_____	_____	Controlling the growth of government.
_____	_____	Providing tax relief.
_____	_____	Fighting crime.
_____	_____	Strengthening social programs.
_____	_____	Solving transportation problems.
_____	_____	Protecting the environment.
_____	_____	Other: _____
		_____
		_____

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

---

---

---

---

---

**MAILING INSTRUCTIONS:** Please cut off this page and re-fold it so that the return-mail panel below is on the outside. Fill in your return address and add a stamp. Thank you!

Olympia, Washington 98504-0600

P.O. Box 40600

MIKE CARRELL

GIGI TALCOTT and

State Representatives

name: \_\_\_\_\_

address: \_\_\_\_\_

phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please  
place  
32¢  
stamp  
here



State Representatives  
**GIGI TALCOTT**  
& **MIKE CARRELL**

PO BOX 40600  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0600



Printed on recycled paper

# News & Views

*1998 Session Preview  
and Questionnaire*

BULK RATE  
U. S. POSTAGE PAID  
Washington State  
Department of Printing

*Representative*  
**Mike Carrell**



# News & Views

*Representative*  
**Gigi Talcott**

## Join us for a **PRE-SESSION TOWN HALL MEETING**

**Saturday, Jan. 10  
10 AM to 1 PM**

**Lakewood Library Multi-Purpose Room  
6300 Wildaire Road SW**

With the 1998 Legislature ready to convene on Jan. 12, we look forward to meeting with constituents and listening to your thoughts and concerns before the session begins.

We also look forward to having you help us in tallying the results of the attached survey. By participating with us in this unique activity, you will have a chance to see the opinions of other 28th District residents — while also letting us know your ideas and asking any questions you may have.

This should be a fun and informative event for everyone — us included! — and we sincerely hope you will be able to join us at this town hall meeting.

### **To contact Gigi Talcott . . .**

***Write:***

426 John L. O'Brien Building  
P.O. Box 40600  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0600

***Call:***

Olympia office — (360)786-7890  
Home — (253)564-9779

***E-mail:***

[talcott\\_gi@leg.wa.gov](mailto:talcott_gi@leg.wa.gov)

### **To contact Mike Carrell . . .**

***Write:***

422 John L. O'Brien Building  
P.O. Box 40600  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0600

***Call:***

Olympia office — (360)786-7958  
Home — (253)581-2859

***E-mail:***

[carrell\\_mi@leg.wa.gov](mailto:carrell_mi@leg.wa.gov)

### **District Office Information . . .**

Our in-district office will be closed while the Legislature is in session.

We anticipate opening a district office again once the Legislature adjourns.

Look for an announcement this spring for details on office location, phone number and hours.